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UNCLAS GUANGZHOU 000720

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STATE FOR EAP/CM - WARD
STATE FOR OES/ETC - SORENSEN
STATE FOR OES/PCI - SALZBERG, COVINGTON
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL
USPACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SENV PGOV CH

SUBJECT: Environmental Training Helps Local Officials
Address Enforcement Deficiencies

REF: Guangzhou 701

¶1. (U) Embassy Science Fellow (ESF) provided environmental permit training on May 14 to Shenzhen Environmental Protection Bureau (EPB) experts in response to Pearl River Delta environmental authorities' concerns over deficiencies in their enforcement program. ESF explained how the U.S. EPA uses permits to control industrial and municipal pollutant dischargers. Training covered the permit system's legal framework, the use of general and individual permits, technology-based and water quality-based permit limitations, monitoring, and reporting. Shenzhen environmental officials - widely regarded as having one of the most advanced and innovative environmental programs in China - responded positively to the training, while Guangdong EPB and the Guangzhou State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) officials declined to attend.

¶2. (U) ESF also provided training in Beijing on April 19-20 for SEPA and EPB officials on hazardous waste management, permit systems for power generators, treatment and disposal facilities, inspection tools and enforcement.

¶3. (U) Participants inquired about how EPA and States delineate respective jurisdictional authorities, how EPA makes sure State agencies comply with requirements, and about permit fees. ESF distributed sample permit application forms, showed participants copies of actual permits, and described the permit public notice process. A major part of the training focused on the development of permit limitations and a discussion on technology-based limitations for industry and secondary treatment for municipal dischargers. ESF stressed that monitoring and other reporting are an integral part of the overall permit program and necessary for effective compliance and enforcement.

¶4. (U) EPB compliance and enforcement efforts vary widely depending on location and local government support. Permit training in other large mainland cities will help companies know precisely what is expected of them and will help the Chinese develop a fair and transparent compliance and enforcement system.

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